

Appl. No. : 09/989,563
Filed : November 19, 2001

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for carefully and thoughtfully examining the present application. By way of summary, Claims 1-16 and 25-29 were pending in the present application and were rejected on various grounds in the Office Action mailed September 4, 2007.

Amendments

In the present amendment, the Applicants have amended Claims 1, 4, 6-11, 13-15, and 25, cancelled Claims 26-29, and added new Claims 30-34. Accordingly, Claims 1-16, 25, and 30-34 remain pending for consideration.

Support for the amendments to the Claims may be found in the specification, for example, at paragraphs [0033], [0042], and [0045], and in FIG. 3A.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-16 and 25-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Javanifard (U.S. Patent No. 5,483,486) in view of Furumochi (U.S. Patent No. 5,473,277). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. However, to expedite prosecution, Applicants have amended Claims 1, 4, 6-11, 13-15, and 25 and have cancelled Claims 26-29. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute versions of all amended and canceled claims in future patent applications.

Claims 1-4

The Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because Javanifard, alone or in combination with Furumochi, fails to teach or suggest all the features of amended Claim 1. For example, Javanifard fails to teach or suggest “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator configured to clamp either the test supply voltage or the operational supply voltage and generate a first control signal responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit.” Rather, Javanifard merely teaches a “voltage controlled oscillator (‘VCO’) [that] outputs a regulation signal REG.” Javanifard, col. 19:19-20, 26-29.

Furumochi fails to teach or suggest the features of amended Claim 1 not taught or suggested by Javanifard. Instead, Furumochi teaches a “constant voltage generator

circuit . . . for making fine adjustment of . . . transistors on the basis of external control signals.” Furumochi, Abstract.

For at least these reasons, Claim 1 is allowable over the applied art. Claims 2, 3, and 30 depend from Claim 1 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 2, 3, and 30 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 1-3 and 30.

Claims 4-9 and 31

Claim 4 has been amended to recite, among other things, “a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator configured to clamp either the test supply voltage or the operational supply voltage and generate a first control signal responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit.” Claim 4 is believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 5-9 and 31 depend from Claim 4 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 5-9 and 31 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 4-9 and 31.

Claims 10-14 and 32

Claim 10 has been amended to recite “means for using a voltage regulator to clamp either the test supply voltage or the operation supply voltage.” Claim 10 is believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 11-14 and 32 depend from Claim 10 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 11-14 and 32 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 10-14 and 32.

Claims 15, 16 and 33

Claim 15 has been amended to recite, among other things, “wherein the voltage regulator is configured to clamp the voltage generated by the charge pump.” Claim 15 is believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claims 16 and 33 depend from Claim 15 and are therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claims 16

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and 33 are also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 15-16 and 33.

Claims 25 and 34

Claim 25 has been amended to recite, among other things, "a voltage regulator electrically coupled to the clamp circuit, the voltage regulator configured to clamp the internal supply voltage and generate a first control signal responsive to the clamping threshold of the clamp circuit." Claim 25 is believed to be patentable for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and because of the different features recited therein. In addition, Claim 34 depends from Claim 25 and is therefore patentable for at least this reason. Claim 34 is also patentable due to the unique combination of features recited therein. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request allowance of Claims 25 and 34.

New Claims

New Claims 30-34 are believed to be fully distinguished over the art of record. The new Claims are fully supported by the specification, for example, at paragraphs [0033], [0042], and [0045], and in FIG. 3A.

Other Applications of Assignee

Applicant notes that the following U.S. Patent Application is owned by the assignee of this application:

Appl.No.	Filing Date	Attorney Docket No.	Title
10/457,306	6/9/2003	MICRON.113C2	Clamp Circuit With Fuse Options

Applicant notes that cited references, office actions, responses and notices of allowance currently exist or will exist for the above-referenced matter. Applicant also understands that the Examiner has access to sophisticated online Patent Office computing systems that provide ready access to, for example, specification and drawing publications, pending claims and complete file histories, including, for example, cited art, office actions, responses, and notices of allowance.

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However, if the Examiner cannot readily access any of these, the Applicant would be pleased to provide any of these at any time upon Examiner request.

No Disclaimers or Disavowals

Although the present communication may include alterations to the application or claims, or characterizations of claim scope or referenced art, the Applicants are not conceding in this application that previously pending claims are not patentable over the cited references. Rather, any alterations or characterizations are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. The Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any previously pending or other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by any prior prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any parent, child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that the Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present application.

Conclusion

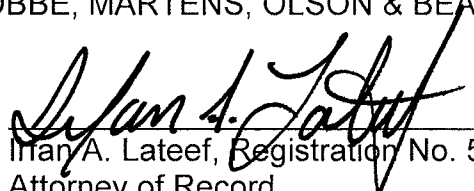
In view of the present amendments and arguments, Applicants submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. If some issue remains that the Examiner believes can be addressed by Examiner's Amendment, he is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned for authorization.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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